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SUBJECT: IRELAND: 2005 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: A. SECSTATE 193439  
[1](#)B. DUBLIN 310  
[1](#)C. DUBLIN 801  
[1](#)D. DUBLIN 944

#### Summary

[1](#)1. Summary. Per ref A, Ireland was not included in the 2004 Annual Terrorism Report, but there are positive developments that might merit its inclusion this year. A remarkable change from 2004 is the September 26 decommissioning of the Provisional Irish Republican Army. Another notable change is that Ireland passed new antiterrorism legislation and became party to four UN conventions on terrorism. It also signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty with the United States and came into compliance with a 2004 UN International Maritime Organization code. End Summary.

#### General Assessment

[1](#)2. On March 9, the Irish government made strides in strengthening antiterrorism legislation when President Mary McAleese signed the Criminal Justice (Terrorism Offenses) Bill 2002 into law. This legislation brought Ireland in line with United Nations Conventions and European Union Framework decisions on combating terrorism. It enabled Ireland to ratify and accede to four UN conventions on terrorism and significantly strengthened the government's ability to seize assets and prosecute those suspected of supporting terrorism. Until this law passed, GOI authorities could pursue and prosecute suspects of terrorism, notably terrorism financing, only if they also had committed criminal offenses in Ireland or had been designated by the UN or EU. On September 15, Ireland signed, subject to ratification, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

[1](#)3. In July, the government completed the installation of new antiterror security measures at Irish international sea ports, bringing Ireland into compliance with the UN International Maritime Organization (IMO) code established in July 2004. These arrangements are aimed at preventing a terrorist strike on Ireland or the use of Irish ports for an attack on another country (ref d).

#### Sanctuary (Safe Haven) Assessments

--Islamic Extremists

[1](#)4. Ireland's new economic prosperity has brought large increases in the immigrant population in the country. This

growth has led to concerns that some immigrants may potentially be involved in terrorist activities. According to press reports, the Irish police and army intelligence officers indicate that the risk of an Islamic terrorist attack on Ireland is low. The reports allege that between 24 and 40 Islamic activists kept under surveillance by Irish security services are suspected of providing financial and logistical support to al-Qaeda and Islamic terrorists abroad.

These reports charge that there may be individuals and groups that use Ireland as a base for providing funds, fake identities, visas, and safe houses for terrorists as they plan attacks on other European countries.

--Colombia Three

15. In August, three men who were found guilty of aiding FARC terrorists in Colombia, secretly returned to Ireland to escape government of Colombia prison sentences. They were arrested and questioned by the Irish national police but released without charge. The Colombian government requested their extradition, but as Ireland has no extradition treaty with Colombia, this is unlikely to happen but remains under review. The Irish Director of Public Prosecutions is also investigating whether charges can be brought against one of the three for traveling on a false passport.

#### Terrorist Groups

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#### IRA

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16. On July 28, a spokesman for the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) made a statement calling for an end to all forms of illegal PIRA activity. This statement was

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confirmed on September 26 by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning announcement that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) met its commitments to put all arms beyond use. The Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) also reported that since the September decommissioning, PIRA shows no evidence of the training and recruitment of terrorists or an intent to return to violence.

17. The IMC released reports on paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. In terms of the Republic of Ireland, the Seventh Report of the IMC, published in October, analyzed continued activity of the following terrorist groups:

#### --The Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA)

CIRA maintains its terrorist capacity and is capable of effective sporadic attacks. The IMC reported that CIRA intends to continue to engage in terrorism and other crime. In the Republic, two CIRA members were arrested in January in possession of an under-car explosive and nine members were imprisoned for charges related to 2003 arrests. Two members were also convicted of unlawful possession of firearms. In December, the Special Criminal Court in Dublin charged a man with possession of an improvised explosive device and membership in an unlawful organization styling itself the Irish Republican Army. Police are investigating his links to CIRA. The case was still pending at the year's end.

#### --The Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA)

RIRA also continues to be a threat. The IMC reported that RIRA is committed to terrorism due to its continued efforts to gain and train members in the use of explosives. In the Republic, five people were convicted of membership in RIRA this year.

#### --The Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA)

According to the IMC, in the first half of 2005, PIRA maintained its capacity as a terrorist organization. The IMC reported that during this period, PIRA decreased its involvement in violence, but increased its participation in

organized criminal activity. It was unclear how active PIRA was in the Irish Republic, but Irish government officials suspected continued recruitment of members until the July 28 statement that called for an end to all forms of illegal activity. Prior to this statement, the Justice Minister estimated that there were approximately 1,500 active members in PIRA. In November 2004, two men were convicted of PIRA membership by the Special Criminal Court in Dublin, as were a further five in February of this year. In October, however, the IMC reported that it saw no evidence that PIRA wanted to return to a campaign of terrorist violence.

#### Foreign Government Cooperation

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¶8. In July, the Irish Justice Minister and U.S. Ambassador signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in a bid to increase cooperation in the fight against global crime and terrorism. This agreement allows for more bilateral cooperation in police investigations and updates rules on extraditions. However, Irish courts' restrictive approach to carrying out extraditions continues to be of concern for U.S. officials.

¶9. POC for 2005 Annual Terrorism Report is Tom Rosenberger, email: rosenbergertm@state.gov.

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